

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 AID-20 OMB-01 NIC-01 DRC-01

/148 W

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R 161200Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8109

INFO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJECT: LOWER HOUSE ORGANIZES FOR 1973-74 TERM

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. THE LOWER HOUSE IN PLENARY SESSION OCTOBER 11 ELECTED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FOR THE 1973-74 LEGISLATIVE YEAR. INITIAL MEMBERSHIP LISTINGS IN THE BLOCS WERE ALSO ANNOUNCED.

2. THE ONLY CANDIDATES FOR OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN WERE ON A SLATE SUBMITTED BY PRO-ADMINISTRATION DEPUTIES. (VOTING FOR THESE OFFICES IS BY SLATES, RATHER THAN BY INDIVIDUAL POSITIONS.) THIS SLATE, HEADED BY INCUMBENT CHAIRMAN NGUYEN BA CAN, WAS ELECTED BY 99 VOTES TO ZERO. ONE DEPUTY ABSTAINED, AND ONE BALLOT FOR CAN'S LIST WAS INVALID. THE REMAINING 57 ACTIVE DEPUTIES, NEARLY ALL OF WHOM WOULD HAVE VOTED IN OPPOSITION,

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WERE ABSENT.

3. APART FROM FOUR PRO-THIEU DEPUTIES NOT AFFILIATED WITH A BLOC, ALL THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES BELONG TO THE TWO PRO-ADMINISTRATION BLOCS. MOST ARE NOT PREVIOUS INCUMBENTS IN THEIR ELEVATED POSITIONS, EXCEPT FOR SIX OF THE MOST IMPORTANT POSITIONS INCLUDING THE HOUSE CHAIRMANSHIP AND THE TWO DEPUTY CHAIRMANSHIPS. THE REASON FOR THE NUMEROUS SHIFTS WAS TO GIVE A NEW SET OF PRO-ADMINISTRATION DEPUTIES A CHANCE TO HOLD RESPONSIBILITY. THE NEW LIST OF OFFICERS AND CHAIRMEN IS AS FOLLOWS:

HOUSE OFFICERS:

- 1) CHAIRMAN NGUYEN BA CAN (RE-ELECTED)
- 2) FIRST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN DINH XUAN MINH (RE-ELECTED)
- 3) SECOND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN MRS. NGUYEN THI HAI (RE-ELECTED)
- 4) SECRETARY GENERAL PHAM ANH
- 5) FIRST DEPUTY SECRETARY
GENERAL PHAM THANH NGOC
- 6) SECOND DEPUTY SECRETARY
GENERAL HO NGOC CAN
- 7) THIRD DEPUTY SECRETARY
GENERAL MA THAT
- 8) COMPTROLLER OF ACCOUNTS NGUYEN VAN CHI
- 9) COMPTROLLER OF OBLIGATED
EXPENDITURES NGUYEN VAN HAO

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN:

- 1) AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE BUI VAN MY
- 2) OPEN ARMS COMMITTEE PHAM HUU GIA

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EL VETERANS COMMITTEE HO KIM LONG

- 4) COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLIC
WORKS COMMITTEE NGUYEN NGOC LIEN
- 5) ECONOMICS COMMITTEE NGUYEN TO
- 6) LABOR COMMITTEE TRAN DUC TRONG
- 7) CAMBODIAN AFFAIRE

COMMITTEE THACH LANG SA

8) BUDGET & FINANCE

COMMITTEE HO VAN XUAN (RE-ELECTED)

9) FOREIGN AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE MRS. TRUONG THI BICH DIEP
(NON-BLOC, RE-ELECTED)

10) INTERIOR COMMITTEE DYONG VY LONG

11) ETHNIC DEVELOPMENT Y DHE ADRONG

12) RURAL DEVELOPMENT

COMMITTEE TRAN DINH NGOC

13) NATIONAL DEFENSE

COMMITTEE TRAN VAN DON (NON-BLOC,
RE-ELECTED)

14) INFORMATION COMMITTEE TRAN VAN AN (NON-BLOC)

15) JUDICIARY COMMITTEE PHAM DUY TUE

16) CULTURE, EDUCATION, AND

YOUTH COMMITTEE TON THAT DONG

17) SOCIAL WELFARE COMMITTEE NGUYEN NGOC BAY (NON-BLOC)

18) PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE NGUYEN VAN NGAN

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RM CHANGES ANNOUNCED IN LOWER HOUSE BLOCS AFFECT ONLY THE
OPPOSITION AND INDEPENDENT CAMPS. THE OPPOSITION PEOPLE'S
SOCIETY BLOC LOSES ONE MEMBER, WHO WILL APPARENTLY SIDE
HENCEFORTH WITH THE ADMINISTRATION. THIS REDUCES THAT BLOC
TO 28. MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, SIX MEMBERS OF INDEPENDENT PEOPLE'S
RIGHT BLOC HAVE WITHDRAWN, AGAIN PRESUMABLY TO SIDE IN THE FUTURE
WITH THE ADMINISTRATION. THIS REDUCES THAT BLOC TO 19, WELL
BELOW THE MINIMUM OF 25 REQUIRED FOR FORMAL BLOC STATUS. AS OF
NOW, PEOPLE'S RIGHTS IS AN INFORMAL "GROUP". SEVERAL OF ITS
REMAINING MEMBERS MAY NOW BE ADMINISTRATION SYMPATHIZERS,
JUDGING FROM THE OCTOBER 11 VOTING. LAST YEAR'S 12-MEMBER
NATIONALIST "GROUP" REPORTEDLY REMAINS IN EXISTENCE, ALTHOUGH
THE LOSS OF THREE OF ITS MEMBERS TO THE ADMINISTRATION FORCES
CAN BE INFERRED FROM THE OCTOBER 11 VOTING.

5. COMMENT: THE ABOVE VOTING SHIFTS GIVE THE PRO-GOVERNMENT
FORCES A DOZEN OF MORE NEW SUPPORTERS. THE POSITIONS OF
THE REMAINING NON-BLOC DEPUTIES SEEM TO BE MOSTLY UNCHANGED,

AND SO THE GOVERNMENT AT PRESENT HAS AN INDICATED MAJORITY OF JUST OVER 100 DEPUTIES, AS CONFIRMED BY THE VOTE ON OCTOBER 11. THE ADMINISTRATION THUS SIGNIFICANTLY STRENGTHENS ITS HAND IN THE LOWER HOUSE. THIS MAJORITY APPEARS TO FALL SHORT BY ONLY A HANDFUL OF VOTES OF THE TWO-THIRDS THAT OBSERVERS SPECULATE THIEU WILL WANT FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS. HE CAN PICK UP MOST OR ALL OF THIS GAP IN THE UPPER HOUSE, BUT AT BEST HE HAS FEW VOTES TO SPARE AND FURTHER POLITICKING WOULD BE REQUIRED IN BOTH HOUSES BEFORE THE PRESIDENT CAN BE ASSURED OF TWO-THIRDS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES. MARTIN

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